Socorro Amateur Radio Association

SARA News www.socorroara.org December 2017

Meetings

The minutes for meetings are at www.socorroara.org/sara/minutes.

The agenda for meetings is located at:

www.socorroara.org/sara/agenda/agenda.pdf

The Christmas Party has no agenda except to have fun and share good food and cheer.

SARA Repeater

SARA supports a VHF repeater located on Socorro Peak immediately west of Socorro. The repeater is "open". The autopatch is currently inoperative.

146.68 (-)
100 or 123 Hz required
123 Hz on output

SARA also supports a UHF D-STAR module 'B' operating at 444.500 MHz + 5.000
Registration instructions are at www.socorroara.org/sara/repeaters/D_STAR_Gateway.pdf

Club Officers

President: James Boswell KA5SIW
Vice President: Brad Smith KD5JNI
Secretary: Bear Albrecht W5VZB
Treasurer: Luis Aguilar WB5JMD
Past President: Jim Lommen KC7QY
ARES DEC /Director: Al Braun AC5BX
Newsletter Editor: Anneliese Bowman AD6UY

Coming events

Christmas Potluck! December 13 at 6:00 pm at Bear's house
1772 Main St. (NM 1) San Antonio

Take I-25 to Exit 139, turn right at the blinking light, go two blocks south.

House is on the NE corner of 4th Street. Plenty of space to park across the street by the church.

From the President
James Boswell, KA5SIW

Bear and Kathy Albrecht have been nice to welcome us all into their home for a Holiday covered-dish dinner. The event is December 13, and starts about 6:00PM. Bear and Kathy's place is located in San Antonio, on Highway 1, 2 blocks south of the blinking light. Everyone in the club is invited. I plan to bring some smoked pork tenderloin and I am sure we will have a grand spread of food.

Since we don't have a regular club “meeting” this month I look forward to hearing lots of new topics and ideas at our January meeting. A Spring picnic could be in the works and Field Day will be upon us soon enough.

Eric and Mike helped Robert get a new antenna up at his home QTH. I want to thank both of them. In every way and every time we help one another, we grow the club. When I was a member of a larger amateur radio club, we would “book” weekends dates to help each other put up antennas or do tower work.

This Thanksgiving Margaret and I took the “Escape Pod”, our travel trailer, out to Monzano Mountains State Park. This park is about 100 miles from Socorro, cradled in the mountains at about 7600 ft. elevation. This would be a great place to do Field Day. They have a group pavilion that holds 50 people and reserved camping spots around the pavilion.

Walking around Manzano Mountain State Park, I noticed a smart-looking big RV with a HF antenna. I knocked on the door to introduce myself, and Bill Ripley answered the door. Bill and his wife Alma were also hiding from the holiday crazies. I have known Bill Ripley since he was the president of the Arlington Texas Amateur Radio Club back in 1984. Bill Ripley is chairman of the Duke City ham-fest organization. I have meet Bill a few times at amateur radio activities in Albuquerque. See what a small world amateur radio is.

At the last club meeting last month I gave a photo tour of my ham radio shack. Now I want to follow up with a basic description of the set-up of a ham shack. First, you need to be located by an exterior wall of the building, this is to route coax out to the antennas and get a good short, low impedance ground connection. Next you will need a duplex electrical outlet for lamps, power supplies and maybe a computer. Many times you can buy a small desk at a thrift store or you can use an old interior door placed horizontally. If you plan to run a large HF amplifier you will need a 220volt outlet and that requires major electrical upgrades.

You need to run a single point ground connection across the back of the desk or work surface. You want a low impedance connections here, I like to use ½ in copper pipe or a heavy tinned ground braid. You will need to drill a hole through the wall to route this ground cable outside the building to at lease one ground rod. The ground rod should be placed close the building and near the drip line, to help keep the ground rod in moist soil. For this connection copper strap works best, then heavy braid, you can use multiple runs of 16 GA. wire if you have to. I clean the ground rod and use at least 2 hose clamps or a split bolt to make the connection, apply OX-Guard or Pentatrox to this connection before you mate the connection to prevent oxidation.

Using RG-8 braid I make connections to the HF rig, antenna tuner and HF amplifier. The opposite ends of these connections should be soldered to the ½ inch copper pipe or heavy ground braid. For connection to the radio or equipment I take the RG-8 braid, spread the braid to fit the ground bolt on the radio or equipment, then solder the braid with a soldering gun forming a ring terminal. Clean the flux after soldering.

For RF exposure safety considerations your power supply should be placed at a lower level somewhat away from the primary operating position. If you use a HF amp you should also position the amp away from eye level, I like to set the power supply and RF amp below the desk on an additional enclosure. Be sure all equipment had a good ground connection back to the single point ground located on the back of the desk. Do not jumper the ground connections equipment to equipment to equipment.

I position the HF rigs on the desktop. This allows a very ergonomic operating positioning of resting the forearm on the table while adjusting the controls on

the HF rigs. There I also have room for the desk mic, CW key and log book. In is nice to have a desk lamp here. The 2 meter rig rests on top of extension speakers or on top of the Hf rig.

At my station I use a coax switch to alternate between the HF rigs. Make sure this coax switch grounds the unused radio connection to prevent RF from straying into the unused radio. Some of the cheap "CB" antenna switches do not ground the unused switch position. You want the coax connections to be short and direct, radio to antenna switch to antenna tuner. If you use a HF amp be sure the antenna tuner can handle the output power of the amplifier.

For DC power connections I use 30 amp Anderson power pole connections. I use a European style terminal strip rated for 35 or 50 amps. I run jumpers between the separate connections. If the terminal strip has 12 positions, I jumper 6 for positive and 6 for negative. These terminal strips are formed from white nylon and you can use a magic marker to color the terminal strip red or black to denote polarity. For the connection from the power supply to the terminal strip I use a minimum of a dual run of 14 GA. wire to minimize voltage drop. (Ed note A pic of Jim's shack is at the end.)

Cool!

While this is not related to amateur radio it is really neat:

https://hackaday.com/2017/11/05/mendocino-motor-drives-cubicle-conversations/#content

D-STAR Report
November 16, 2017

In addition to directly logging into the D-STAR server to monitor things, many other online resources are available to anybody interested in the D-STAR network to discern the status of any node in the system. Here are a few that I keep tabs on with respect to the Socorro ARA D-STAR repeater. I encourage anybody interested to check them out and dig further if interested. Let me know if you observe any problems with our D-STAR repeater and I will address the issue ASAP. An email to dstar@socorroara.org will spawn messages to all system administrators.

As I write this, the D-STAR server gateway is current as reported on http://dsyncg2.dstarusers.org/

Fully 39% of servers are reportedly not current. Additionally, http://dstar.info/query.html reports the SARA W5AQA D-STAR system is not flagged for blacklist or deletion. http://dsync.dstar.info/gw_status.php?gw=W5AQA reports the SARA W5AQA D-STAR repeater is synchronized, with no pending updates, with the Gateway software up to date. http://www.dstarusers.org/viewrepeater.php?system=w5aqa reports the last user as W5VZB at 11/03/17 02:02:59 UTC on W5AQA B 440 MHz. (This will likely have changed since this piece was written.) http://nj6n.com/dplusmon/?mycall=&gateway=w5aqa indicates five of the most recent users, though is not always complete or up to date.

For a report on the current condition of the D-STAR repeater, http://w5aqa.dstargateway.org/ lists remote users, linked modules and last heard user.

Additionally, the critical registration database is automatically saved to the cloud in duplicate locations, should the system ever need to be rebuilt.

Lastly, Ed James, a long time SARA member, supporter and D-STAR wizard, has been added to assist with administration, per consensus from the last SARA meeting. His insights will doubtless be greatly beneficial. We now need to add his email to the dstar@socorroara.org respawn address.

Ed James may be contacted via email at ka8jmw@comcast.net or phone at (505) 265-4015

73,
Ray

Al H. Rader, WA5POL SK
April 22, 1942 - 03/18/2017

Al H. Rader, 74, of Albuquerque, NM, died on March 18, 2017. Al died in his home from natural

causes. He was born on April 22, 1942, in Washington, D.C. and moved to Albuquerque in early childhood where he has remained a lifelong resident in the North Valley. He graduated from Highland High School in 1960. Al cherished many long-lasting friendships throughout his life and was very active in his hobbies which included amateur radio operation. He served his country as a National Guardsman in the late 1960's.

Al also enjoyed spending time with his wife Linda (who preceded him on August 20, 2006), camping, riding his recumbent bike, and quipping terrible puns to family and friends.

Al is survived by his son, Thomas Rader, and wife Mary, and many other dear friends & family members.

He was interred at Sunset Memorial Park on March 22, 2017 to be with his beloved wife Linda in their shared final place of rest. The family requests, in lieu of flowers donations be made to Animal Humane Society of Albuquerque.

Published in Albuquerque Journal on Mar. 26, 2017